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RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[*without reference to a Main Committee (A/52/L.72/Rev.1)*]

52/12. Renewing the United Nations: a programme for reform

B*

The General Assembly,

Having considered further the report of the Secretary-General on renewing the United Nations: a programme for reform,[1] and the recommendations contained therein,

Recalling its resolution 52/12 A of 12 November 1997,

Recalling also its resolutions 50/227 of 24 May 1996, 51/240 of 20 June 1997 and 51/241 of 31 July 1997, as well as all other relevant resolutions and decisions, which contain legislative mandates and programme guidance, and, in particular, the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001,

Reaffirming that financial implications of any reform measure or proposal on which the General Assembly is to take action should be considered in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly,

A. *Deputy Secretary-General*

1. *Decides* to establish the post of Deputy Secretary-General as an integral part of the Office of the Secretary-General, as set out in addendum 1 to the report of the Secretary-General[2] and in the statement made by the Secretary-General on 4 November 1997 to the open-ended informal consultations of the General

* Consequently, resolution 52/12 of 12 November 1997 becomes resolution 52/12 A.

[1] A/51/950 and Add.1-7.

[2] A/51/950/Add.1.

Assembly on United Nations reform: measures and proposals,[3] without prejudice to the mandate of the Secretary-General as provided by the Charter of the United Nations and, in accordance with the existing system of decision-making, with responsibilities delegated by the Secretary-General, including the following:

(*a*) To assist the Secretary-General in managing the operations of the Secretariat;

(*b*) To act for the Secretary-General at United Nations Headquarters in the absence of the Secretary-General and in other cases as may be decided by the Secretary-General;

(*c*) To support the Secretary-General in ensuring intersectoral and inter-institutional coherence of activities and programmes and to support the Secretary-General in elevating the profile and leadership of the United Nations in the economic and social spheres, including further efforts to strengthen the United Nations as a leading centre for development policy and development assistance;

(*d*) To represent the Secretary-General at conferences, official functions and ceremonial and other occasions as may be decided by the Secretary-General;

(*e*) To undertake such assignments as may be determined by the Secretary-General;

2. *Notes* that the Secretary-General will appoint the Deputy Secretary-General following consultations with Member States and in accordance with Article 101 of the Charter of the United Nations and that the term of office of the Deputy Secretary-General will not exceed that of the Secretary-General;

B. *New approaches to policy formulation*

3. *Welcomes* the recommendations of the Secretary-General aimed at the rationalization, streamlining and enhancement of the work of the General Assembly, taking into account the measures already undertaken towards this end in order to further strengthen the Assembly as the organ of the United Nations that most fully embodies the universal and democratic character of the Organization;

4. *Decides*, in this context, to continue during its fifty-second session its in-depth consideration of those recommendations under the item entitled "Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly", taking into account the report to be submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with resolution 51/241;

C. *Peace, security and disarmament*

5. *Invites* Member States to improve the supply of information to the Secretary-General that could assist the Organization to prevent conflict and maintain international peace and security in full accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations;

6. *Stresses* that enhancing the rapid deployment capacity of the United Nations in peacekeeping operations can play a valuable role in the effectiveness of its response to a conflict, and, in this context, requests the appropriate organs to consider, as a matter of priority, specific measures to that effect, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 52/69 of 10 December 1997 and taking into account the proposals to be submitted by the Secretary-General and the views of Member States;

7. *Endorses* the recommendation that the Security Council, in establishing a peacekeeping operation in the future, should prescribe a time-frame for the conclusion of the status-of-forces agreement between the United Nations and the host Government for the operation in question and that, pending the conclusion of

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[3] See A/52/585.

such an agreement, a model status-of-forces agreement would apply provisionally unless otherwise agreed by the parties concerned, and invites the Security Council to consider the matter;

8. *Decides* that the Disarmament Commission and the First Committee of the General Assembly should undertake a review of their work, to be concluded before the end of the fifty-second session, with a view to its revitalization, rationalization and streamlining, taking into account discussions that have already taken place on this issue;

D. *Economic and social affairs*

9. *Invites* the Economic and Social Council to consider, at its organizational and substantive sessions in 1998, as part of the review of the mandates, composition, functions and working methods of its functional commissions and expert groups and bodies, as mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution 50/227, the recommendations of the Secretary-General relating to the reform of its subsidiary bodies, including a time-frame for implementation of its decisions thereon, as well as his recommendations relating to the organization and methods of work of the Council, and to report thereon to the Assembly as early as possible during its fifty-second session;

10. *Invites* the Economic and Social Council, in consultation with Member States and appropriate intergovernmental regional bodies, to conduct a general review of the regional commissions at its substantive session of 1998, bearing in mind the relevant provisions of resolution 50/227 and the individual reviews each commission has already carried out, in order to consider the competencies of the regional commissions, taking into account the competencies of global bodies and other regional and subregional intergovernmental bodies, and to submit a report thereon to the General Assembly before the end of its fifty-second session;

11. *Endorses* the recommendation of the Secretary-General to discontinue the High-level Advisory Board on Sustainable Development;

E. *Development cooperation*

12. *Accepts* that management of funds and programmes would be enhanced by greater integration of intergovernmental oversight, and requests the Economic and Social Council, in the context of the next triennial policy review of the United Nations, during its operational activities segment of 1998, to consider arrangements for closer integration of the governance oversight of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund and of the United Nations Children's Fund, with consecutive and/or joint meetings of the existing Executive Boards, bearing in mind the respective mandates of the Executive Boards of the funds and programmes;

13. *Takes note*, in this context, of the decision already taken by the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund and by the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund to organize a joint meeting in January 1998;

14. *Recognizes* the urgent need for resources for development on a predictable, continuous and assured basis, taking fully into account the principle of neutrality, and requests the Secretary-General to submit, by the end of March 1998, for consideration by the General Assembly, specific proposals for the establishment of a new system of core resources, taking into account the views expressed by Member States;

F. *Humanitarian affairs*

15. *Decides* to designate the Emergency Relief Coordinator as the United Nations Humanitarian Assistance Coordinator, who will, *inter alia*, retain responsibility for coordination of natural disaster relief;

16. *Decides also* to transfer to the United Nations Development Programme the responsibilities of the Emergency Relief Coordinator for operational activities for natural disaster mitigation, prevention and

preparedness, with the understanding that the resources for this task will be separate and additional to the resources of the United Nations Development Programme for development activities and that they will be provided by a grant from the regular budget of the United Nations for the biennium 1998-1999;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit, before the end of the fifty-second session of the General Assembly, a report on the method of financing of natural disaster mitigation, prevention and preparedness activities beyond the biennium 1998-1999;

18. *Decides* to establish a humanitarian affairs segment of the Economic and Social Council, with effect from 1998, and, in this connection, requests the Council to consider expeditiously the related practical arrangements and make an early recommendation to the General Assembly, without prejudice to the work of the other segments of the Council;

G. *Financing the Organization*

19. *Reaffirms* the obligation of all Member States, in accordance with the Charter, to pay their assessed contributions in full, on time and without conditions;

20. *Takes note* of the recommendation of the Secretary-General that a revolving credit fund be established through voluntary contributions or any other means of financing that Member States may wish to suggest, and requests the Secretary-General, taking into account the views expressed by Member States, to submit by the end of March 1998 detailed proposals to the General Assembly, through the competent bodies, for the proposed establishment of such a fund, including its financing, management and operation, while emphasizing that the priority lies in the compliance by all Member States with their financial obligations to the United Nations;

21. *Takes notes also* of the recommendation of the Secretary-General that, in future, any unspent balances under the regular budget at the end of the fiscal period be retained, and invites the competent bodies to consider the implications of such retention, as well as the appropriate use of such balances, including possible allocation to development programmes, on the basis of a report to be submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly, before the end of its fifty-second session;

H. *Management*

22. *Decides* to examine the recommendation of the Secretary-General on initiating a review of the International Civil Service Commission, and, on the basis of information to be provided by the Secretary-General, requests the competent intergovernmental bodies to consider the modalities for such a review and to report to the General Assembly before the end of its fifty-second session;

23. *Notes* that the Secretary-General has submitted the draft Code of Conduct for United Nations Staff[4] to the General Assembly, and agrees to expedite its consideration;

24. *Decides* to establish, in the programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, a development account to be funded from savings from possible reductions in administration and other overhead costs, without affecting full implementation of mandated programmes and activities, and requests the Secretary-General to submit a detailed report by the end of March 1998 identifying the sustainability of this initiative, as well as the modalities of implementation, the specific purposes and associated performance criteria for the use of such resources;

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[4] A/52/488.

25. *Takes note* of the recommendation of the Secretary-General to shift United Nations programme budgeting towards a system of results-based budgeting, and requests him to submit, through the competent bodies, a more detailed report that will include a full explanation for the proposed change, and the methodology to be used, as well as a mock-up of one or more sections of the budget for consideration before the end of the fifty-second session of the General Assembly;

I. *Longer-term changes*

26. *Recognizes* that reform of the United Nations will be an ongoing process and that there is a need for the United Nations to consider changes of a more fundamental nature and other broader issues, and invites the Secretary-General to elaborate further his proposals, taking into account the views of Governments, and to present them to the General Assembly by the end of March 1998 on:

(*a*) A new concept of trusteeship;

(*b*) A Millennium Assembly;

(*c*) A Millennium Forum;

(*d*) The United Nations system (a Special Commission at the ministerial level to examine the need for possible amendments to the Charter of the United Nations and the treaties from which the specialized agencies derive their mandates);

(*e*) Provisions whereby initiatives that involve new mandates and institutional machinery would be subject to specific time limits that would require explicit review and renewal by the General Assembly (sunset provisions);

27. *Looks forward* to the convening of the United Nations Conference of Plenipotentiaries to finalize and adopt a convention to establish an international criminal court as a step that would strengthen significantly the rule of law in the century ahead;

28. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-third session the item entitled "United Nations reform: measures and proposals".

78th plenary meeting
19 December 1997